2. ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT REGARDING THE APPOINTMENT OF A CONSTITUTIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr: President: ..To implement the announcements made in the Legislative Council on the opening day of the Session, Government propose to appoint a Constitutional Advisory Committe consisting of 7 members,and to invite the non-official members of the Legislative Council to elect from among themselves 4 members to this Committee.

The functions of the Committee will be:—

(1) to advise the Government in matters connected with any discussions which may take place with the Government of Madras and Travancore regarding the formation of a Kerala Union,

(2) to advise the Government regarding the measures to be adopted with a view to the establishment of responsible Government and

(3) to study matters which will fall to be considered in connection with the State's relations with the new Union Government of India and to make recommendations regarding them.

The election of 4 non-official members from the Legislative Council will be conducted at 5-15 p. m. on Tuesday, the 13th August 1946. Nominations should be handed over to the Legislative Council Secretary before 5 p. m. on Saturday, the 10th August 1946.

The House will now resume discussion on the cut motions on the grant under Miscellaneous.

3. VOTING OF DEMANDS FOR GRANTS

41—Miscellaneous.—*(Cont.)*

CUT MOTIONS

1. The Administration of the Food Department

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Vadakkancheri):* Mr. President, Cochin is a deficit area as regards food. It is well known that paddy and rice used to be imported from Burma and other surplus provinces and this practice being completely stoppped with the occupation of Burma by Japan, early in 1942 our food question assumed a very serious turn. Government immediately reacted to the situation and began with controlling of prices as also with supply of demands. They had the boldness and I congratulate them for that when the Government found that these will not suit the situation they boldly introduced a very intelligent system of commandeering followed by an austre system of country-wide rationing. It doubtless stands to the credit of Cochin that we were the first to go in for a country-wide rationing. Take credit for all that.

The Food Supplies Department is a creature of war that happily ended last year. Now, Sir, ever since this department was instituted and the same began to function, improvements connected with the Food Department used to be discussed in this House in some form or other. Very searching questions used to be put and answered—attempted to be answered rather. In this Council there were cut motions moved whenever the opportunity for that presented itself. They were also discussed with a thoroughness deserving of the vital question. There were two full dressed debates on this subject initiated by me on kind permission being granted for such discussion and during these occassions mention used to be made by me appreciating the working of the Government and give them due credit for all they have done. But we never hesitated to give what according to us were valuable suggestions to cure the defects actually seen in the working of the department. Various suggestions to work the department more efficiently more usefully, more equitably were made. In initiating the debate on both these occasions on December 1943 and 1944, I put forward, as also very many other Hon'ble friends of mine who participated in the debate, also put forward concrete suggestions for the better ment of the depar - ment. One of them, Sir, is the commandeering system. Commandeering, of course, was done seemingly efficiently, only seemingly because the target of collection officers was the poor cultivator who has no manner of influence who could not easily evade giving all that he has. The unanimous opinion of this House had been that very many persons occupying very high position having very great influence throughout the State used not to be touched by the collection officers thereby reducing them to the position of 'untouchables' of the comandeering system. One who cannot be touched is generally called an untouchable and therefore those persons, those landlords having very large quantities of paddy, having high connections and therefore very

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly